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Two Workmen, water colour by Maxwell Bates. Collection: Donald W. Buchanan

CANADIAN ART

Winter Number

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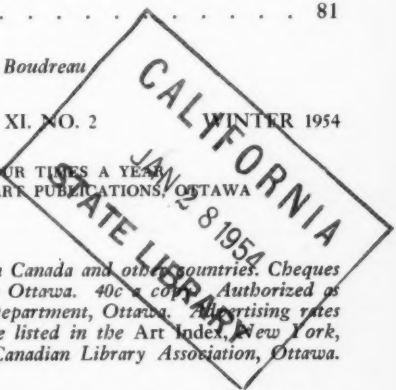
CANADIAN ART VOL. XI. NO. 2 WINTER 1954

PUBLISHED FOUR TIMES A YEAR
BY THE SOCIETY FOR ART PUBLICATIONS, OTTAWA

SUBSCRIPTION RATE

\$1.50 a year (\$4.00 for 3 years) in Canada and other countries. Cheques should be made payable at par in Ottawa. 40¢ a copy. Authorized as Second Class Mail, Post Office Department, Ottawa. Advertising rates upon application. All articles are listed in the Art Index, New York, and the Canadian Index of the Canadian Library Association, Ottawa.

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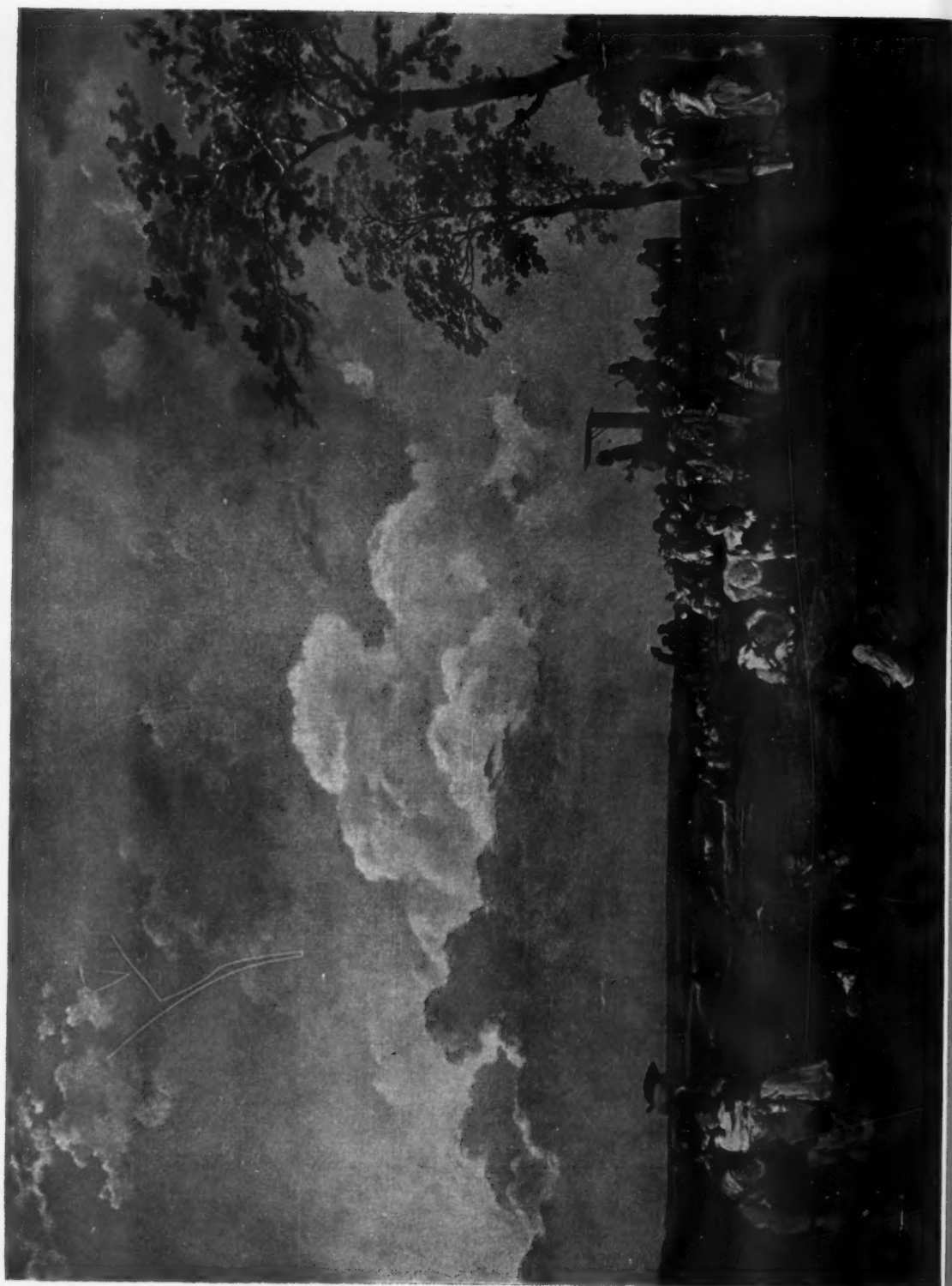
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European Masters from Canadian Collections

An exhibition, "European Masters from Canadian Collections", opens in Toronto on January 15 and will be shown in Ottawa and Montreal later in the season. From it one can obtain an impression of the variety and also the limitations in the collecting of European masters in Canada.

The acquiring of pictures by Canadians goes further back in history than is usually suspected. Works of art were being imported into New France in the early seventeenth century before Canada had any artists of her own. Public collections started much later.

The Art Association of Montreal (now the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts) began in 1860 as an exhibiting society, but it was not until some thirty years later that its first paintings were acquired. The National Gallery of Canada founded in 1880, made a few purchases before its incorporation in 1913, but only after that date did its real development begin. One picture listed in its first catalogue, Hogarth's *John Herring*, acquired in 1911, is included in this exhibition. The Art Gallery of Toronto, founded in 1900, has also formed its collection in quite recent years. All three institutions have been assisted by generous donors: Toronto by Frank Wood, the Eaton family and others; Montreal by the Angus family and Miss Adaline Van Horne's bequest; the National Gallery especially by H. S. Southam, C.M.G.

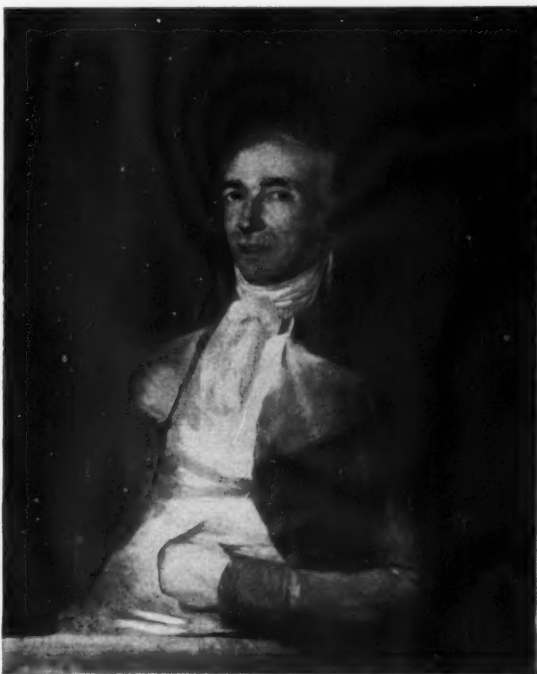
Meanwhile, private collecting had its hey-day around the turn of the century, particularly in Montreal. There the captains of industry and finance, such as Sir William Van Horne, R. B. Angus and Lord Strathcona, amassed many works, some of them important treasures. Van Horne was the most catholic and perspicacious of them; his choices ranged from El Greco to Toulouse-Lautrec. From this collection, which has largely remained in the country, Mrs. William Van Horne has lent a Romney portrait to the exhibition, and

the Montreal Museum an El Greco portrait, a Guardi sea-piece and Tiepolo's *Campaspe* bequeathed to it by Miss Van Horne. From Toronto, Mr. Frank Wood has lent a Ruisdael landscape; and the Art Gallery of Toronto its famous Gainsborough, *The Harvest Wagon*, which it owes to Mr. Wood, and its Frans Hals which came from the Eaton family.

Chronologically, the exhibition has been arbitrarily limited to the work of painters whose main activity occurred before the twentieth century. It is to be hoped that future exhibitions will reveal to the public our holdings in contemporary European art, prints and drawings, Oriental art and the prehistoric and primitive arts. The purpose of the present exhibition is to make the public more conscious of our artistic resources and to provide stimulation towards further efforts by collectors. And by collectors are meant not only those private individuals of means who set an example by their discriminating taste but also the great mass of the public who are the real owners and developers of our public collections.

FRANCISCO GOYA. *The Marqués de Castrofuerte*
The Montreal Museum of Fine Arts

Opposite: JAMES PHILIP DE LOUTHERBOURG
A Midsummer Afternoon with a Methodist Preacher.
The National Gallery of Canada





EMILY CARR
Kispiax Village
The Art Gallery
of Toronto

East is West—Thoughts on the Unity and Meaning of Contemporary Art

WALTER ABELL

HAPPENING ONCE to see Emily Carr's *Kispiax Village* beside a Jack Humphrey water colour of Saint John—a coincidence reproduced for the reader in our first two illustrations—I was struck by what might be called their common denominator. To be sure the subject-matter of these two pictures is geographically divided as far as the west coast is from the east, and culturally divided as far as aboriginal life from white civilization. But both pictures show houses and poles. Totem poles, telegraph poles: symbols of power to their respective epochs. More important—the real common denominator—both pictures involve a theme which might perhaps be described as that of the "ghost town."

The ghost town blends two main qualities. It is old, and it is deserted. During Emily Carr's lifetime, British Columbia seethed with modern developments which converted it into a land of factories and skyscrapers, automobiles and airplanes. These things Carr did not paint. Her artistic sensitivity drew her away from the present to the remote remnants of a vanishing past. Humphrey does not need to leave the

present to find the past. Saint John is a city of today in an architectural setting of yesterday. As Graham McInnes put it, the patterns of its "mid-Victorian architecture," reflected in Humphrey's water colours, evoke "a sadness and a sense of *memento mori*."

Both our pictures thus reflect the old. They also share the other component of the ghost town: its emptiness. Many West Coast Indian villages are actually uninhabited. *Kispiax* may or may not have been when Carr painted it. If it had inhabitants, she painted them out. And Humphrey, for the most part, paints out the inhabitants of Saint John. The streets he shows us are usually deserted. Or if an individual appears here and there, he is smudged to anonymity by a stroke of the brush. It is the community *as if* uninhabited that preoccupies the painters in both these cases. The uninhabitedness is one of those distortions which an artist's vision can compel him to make if he does not find it in the outer world; distortions which, in some mysterious way, we feel to be artistically significant.

Contemporary fascination with the old and

the deserted is not limited to these two artists, nor to Canada. Variations of the theme have appeared in most countries that boast a modern art. We think of ghostly houses and empty streets by Burchfield and Hopper in the United States; of shuttered byways by Utrillo in France. How characteristic of our time is this vision of the community, and how different from earlier visions of it, can be realized by thinking back to the towns of Breughel filled with teeming life and the piazzas populated by Canaletto and Guardi.

Fascination with the ghost town, it seems, is one of the archetypal impulsions of art in the twentieth century. Why should this be so? That is a question to which we shall return below. For the moment let us follow up the idea of the "common denominator." The reader will perhaps agree that below the differences between the Carr and the Humphrey—below both the superficial differences of subject-matter and the more significant differences of plastic conception—there is a level on which they merge as related expressions of a common creative intuition. This is not too surprising in their case, since both deal with architectural aspects of the Canadian scene. But the principle illustrated by means of them can be carried much further. Other and more contrasting forms of contemporary art begin to

take their places in a common visionary order when, so to speak, we learn to analyse and combine our artistic fractions.

It is only a step for instance, from the uninhabited city to the uninhabited country: the landscape. In a sense the uninhabited city is a version of this wider theme. It is the architectural landscape. The landscape proper has occupied an even more extended segment of recent western and Canadian art, reaching one of its Canadian climaxes in studies of the northern wilderness. Obviously, as will be further recognized below, the wilderness implies the new and undeveloped. Less obvious but equally symbolic is the fact that it presents the old and the deserted. In the now classic imagery of the Group of Seven we pass behind human time into the primeval eons of the eroded rock; we pass beyond even the suggestion of human settlement into the world without man. It is the same as the ghost town, only more so. It is the ghost universe.

Still life, another favourite motif of recent times, fits into the same drift: inanimate objects on the periphery of life, frequently homely outmoded objects. The things we actually use today, the aluminum saucepans, the colourful plastics, find few takers in the artists' studios. Flower-pots, clay cooking vessels, wine bottles, all manner of bric-a-brac with a past, have

JACK HUMPHREY
Vista in Saint John
Collection:
Walter Abell



been painted hundreds of times. A number of recent still-life painters reveal a fascination for even more remote objects: ox skulls, even human skulls (with a thought back to Cézanne). And then you have widely shared current sensitivity to the appeal of driftwood: the silent beautiful bones of ghost trees.

All these themes, from the empty Saint John street to the northern wilderness and the pots and pans of yester-year, are related by sympathetic affinities. Although there may be exceptions, I believe that if we analyse the other subjects characteristic of recent art, they will reveal similar affinities with each other and with those we have considered.

The major divergences of contemporary art, however, are less between subjects than between ways of painting them. They are divergences of style. Conflicting points of view—the more realistic, the abstract, the surrealistic—have seemed to the public, and have sometimes been declared by their exponents, to be incompatible with each other. What about these sharper contrasts in contemporary art? Are there common denominators in terms of which they also merge as aspects of a pervading oneness? I believe so. Gradually

through the years, and not without a series of surprises to myself, I have come to the conclusion that if we reach the lowest common denominator, *all* forms of contemporary art reveal a kinship with each other. What seem on the surface to be ways of saying different things, turn out in the depths to be different ways of saying the same thing.

The idea is less easy to demonstrate in the case of style than in that of subject-matter because the sources of style lie deeper in the unconscious. They have to be approached by some technique akin to that of psychoanalysis; preferably by what I would call "psycho-historical" analysis. That is to say, the forms of imagery characteristic of a given style—let us say abstraction—are to be regarded as projections of underlying psychic states; and since style evolves collectively, like language, and is not the product or property of any single individual, the states which it projects must be, at least in part, collective psychic states. These states in turn do not emerge from nowhere. They emerge from history. They are a mental and emotional climate rising, mist-like, from the historical situation being experienced by the given society. The artist's



F. H. VARLEY

*Some Day
the People
will Return*

*The National
Gallery of Canada:
Canadian War
Memorials Collection*

LAWREN
HARRIS

*North Shore,
Lake Superior*

*The National
Gallery of
Canada*



creative mission begins in sensitivity to this psycho-social climate. It ends when, through his intuitive, imaginative, and form-building powers, he has succeeded in giving that climate visual, literary, or other expression. In this view a style of art is a statement of historical realities, consciously or unconsciously transmuted by the artist into imaginative form.

Let me illustrate with an example from past history: the change from a realistic to an abstract style that took place during the later periods of the Old Stone Age. This change is summarized by three of our illustrations. During its Magdalenian period, Paleolithic art had achieved the remarkable realism typified by the famous reindeer at Font-de-Gaume. But there came a time when this realism ebbed away, giving place to a flatter more schematic style. Two stages of this trend can be observed in our reproduction of some of the rock paintings at Cogul. The larger forms are still semi-realistic; the small reindeer and hunter at the upper left approach the verge of abstraction. Finally in the Azillian period, at the end of the Old Stone Age, representation virtually

ceased. The characteristic art of the time was non-objective, as shown in our reproduction of Azillian designs on pebbles.

To analyse this sequence psycho-historically, we have to do two things. We have to turn to the archaeologists to find out what kind of historical circumstances accompanied these changes in art. And we have to turn to psychologists to find out what mental channels could have led from those historical circumstances to an artistic trend away from a realistic style toward an abstract one.

Historically it turns out that the realistic Paleolithic art synchronized more or less with the economic apogee of hunting life and that, when convention and abstraction followed, they coincided with the gradual decline of hunting economy. At the end of the Old Stone Age, the glacial epoch was passing. Climate, flora, and fauna were changing. Most of the key forces to which man had adapted himself, and upon which he depended for his welfare, were disappearing from his world. He was faced with the double problem of extricating himself from a habitual way of



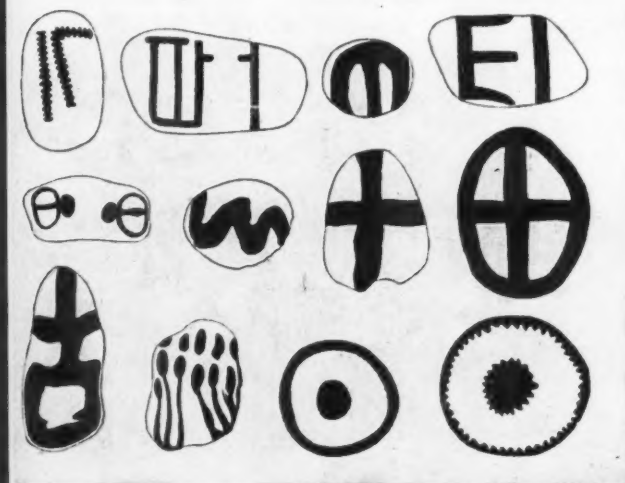
Reindeer. Cave of Font-de-Gaume, France



Rock paintings at Cogul, Spain

Below: Azillian designs on pebbles

Photos: Courtesy of the Hispanic Society of America



life and of making enormous efforts of re-adaptation.

Somehow, it seems, the growing tension of readaptation must have been the psychic force that energized the drift away from realism toward abstraction in art. Adequate analysis of the psychological processes involved would carry us beyond the limits of an article. In two words, the change of style seems to have reflected a change of mental attitude toward the primary symbol of the old order, the hunted animal. When the realistic reindeer was painted, such animals were the real basis of hunting man's existence. As animal abundance began to fail (the reindeer, for instance, left Europe for the Arctic as the glaciers receded), man still clung traditionally to hunting ways and to the hunting magic of the painted animal, but he did so with less success and consequently with less conviction. What had been a social and artistic vitality was becoming a social and artistic convention. Eventually man realized that dependence on the hunted animal must go, a realization reflected in the disappearance of the animal image from his art. Late Paleolithic abstraction thus symbolized, for the communities that produced it, the mentality of withdrawal from an old order, reorientation, and the search for a new order. The basis for the new order was to emerge in subsequent Neolithic times when man discovered agriculture as a replacement for hunting.

This example can serve us in two ways. It provides, by implication, a means of interpreting the modern abstract style; and it offers, in the mentality of transition, what appears to be the lowest common denominator for all forms of contemporary art. Obviously—as the Fowler, Cosgrove, Webber sequence in our illustrations will serve to recall—the recent Canadian and general western trend away from realism toward abstraction is a close parallel to the later Paleolithic progression. Obviously also our world, like that of Paleolithic man, is in transition between two ways of life. An economic revolution, the industrial revolution, has precipitated so many technical innovations and social problems that our heritage from the past has become undependable, our future indeterminable, our present in-

secure. The mentality of this transition, with all its losses and pains, its consoling discoveries and sustaining hopes, appears to be the tensional centre of our present creative life. Our many and varied artistic idioms are the colours of a spectrum into which this single tensional light is broken by the prism of art.

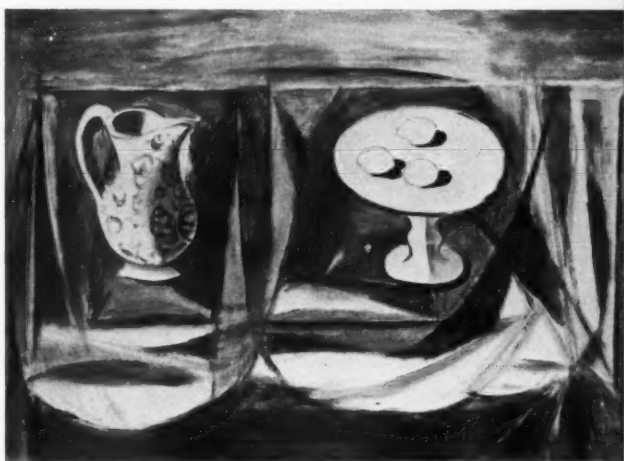
What I have called the "ghost" themes release the mood by holding up symbols of faded yesterdays or scenes remote from present tensions. They blend a nostalgic affection for the past with a recognition of the inevitability of its passing. The old is steadfast company in times of change. It has endured. And whatever it may have lost, it has not lost beauty—as the driftwood shows. The uninhabited, particularly uninhabited nature in the wilderness, speaks similar thoughts in opposite phrases. It is a world completely untouched by the old human ways, therefore completely open to the new. Lismer's version of it, often surging with the vitality of plant life, evokes impressions of dynamic energies available for future growth.

Other artists have voiced the common theme through biological or ethnological symbolism. Protozoic forms as used by Marian Scott imply the vital pulse of sub-rational transformations, the growth-potentials of embryonic structures. That this artist made a series of studies on a "cell and fossil" theme is itself iconographically suggestive. As an example of corresponding implications on the ethnological plane, we have the totemic aspect of Emily Carr's subject-matter. What is the totem pole, for us, but a "cell and fossil" of the cultural world?

Themes like those just summarized are indirect reflections of our tensional state. Direct expressions of it occur in war record art, the "social consciousness" movement, and the representation of industrial subjects. These are manifestations of cultural realism in present-day art: that is to say they present, consciously and rationally, the social realities by which our historical destiny is actually being determined. Description is usually at a maximum, symbolism at a minimum, although the two can coalesce as Varley has sometimes shown us. His war memorial painting of a bombed cemetery, at once actual and "ghostly," bears



DANIEL FOWLER. *Duck and Partridge*. Water colour
The National Gallery of Canada



STANLEY COSGROVE. *Still Life with Three Lemons*

GORDON WEBBER. *Abstract Composition*
The Montreal Museum of Fine Arts



the significant title, *Some Day the People Will Return*.

Surrealism plunges below the rational surface into the tensional depths of our life and, finding those depths uneasy, usually translates them, nightmare fashion, into some variation of the archetypal theme of monsters. Abstraction, in the manner already suggested, reacts to the tensional climate by wiping the slate clean of all inherited subject-matter, thus symbolizing a withdrawal from the old and an exploratory attitude toward the new.

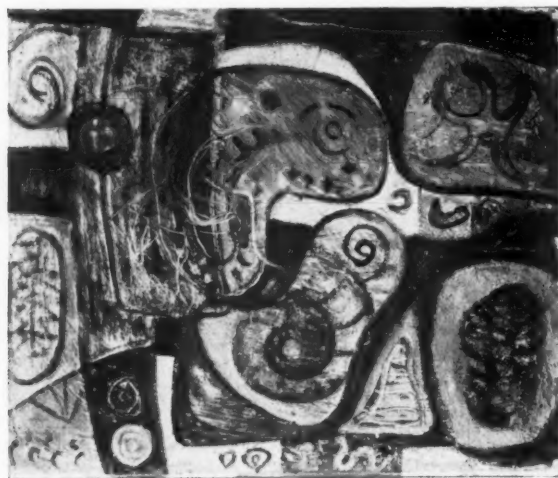
Various reservations and modifications have no doubt occurred to the reader as he pursued the foregoing discussion. This is the more natural since so comprehensive a subject could here be presented only in a partial and sometimes abrupt manner. But if the reader can accept the general trend of thought thus far presented he will perhaps agree with the author in coming to two conclusions. One is that the seeming conflicts between different schools of contemporary art are more apparent than real. In the depths, the differences fade away. The "battle of the styles" is really a mock battle in which individuals or groups may manoeuvre for position, but in which there is no essential conflict of good and bad, right and wrong.

No contemporary subject or style—even if we take the full range from the academic to the most "experimental"—is either good or bad in itself. So far as aesthetic quality is concerned, that depends upon the degree of in-

sight, power, and sensitivity with which the given subject or style is handled by the artist using it. And so far as concerns the quality of being modern, no contemporary idiom has a monopoly on that either. Some styles may have drifted ahead of others on the historical tide, but none can be regarded as final or absolute. All are moving in the same direction, all in some way reflect the same tensional depths, and all will eventually give way to future developments as the tide reverberates to future historical shores.

In relation to the internal dynamics of the world of art and artists, a recognition of the underlying unity of contemporary art should help to promote a fellowship that has not always been evident during recent generations. In the light of such a unity the factional "tumult and the shouting" seem unjustified. They could well give way to a sense of common creative endeavour within which many individuals and groups translate, in their varied ways, the same basic soul-stuff of the contemporary world.

Our second conclusion relates to the importance of contemporary art for society at large. In general the public has neither understood nor liked the recent developments of art, nor has it hesitated to make repeated outcries against them. This distaste has usually been attributed by artists and critics, to lack of aesthetic discrimination. But if the foregoing analysis is sound, there is presumably another and more serious reason for public



MARIAN SCOTT

Fossils

*The National Gallery
of Canada*

resentment. Contemporary art, we have said, symbolizes the tensions of a period of cultural transition. In so far as such tensions are negative, a well known mental law would lead society to repress them as fully as possible from its consciousness. The tendency would be to resist the insecurities of change and cling to the pseudo-securities of a past conceived as if it still existed in the present. Such a psychosocial attitude appears to be the real source of the public's opposition to modern art. Rejection of the art is merely a symptom of resistance to the historical demands which the art symbolizes. Aesthetic sensibilities are only incidentally involved; they readily adjust themselves once the particular historical situation is past.

Now as history amply shows, the one hope of survival for any society in a changing world is its very awareness of change—its

willingness to accept the pains of transition and its adaptive alertness to possibilities of positive reorganization. The greatest danger at such time is refusal to change or to recognize the necessity for change. If late Paleolithic man and his successors had insisted on clinging to a hunting life, human survival would have been precarious and subsequent civilizations would never have been born. It was only on the more ample basis of agriculture that historic civilizations arose, and agriculture was not likely to develop so long as man persisted in identifying his concept of existence with the techniques of hunting. In slowly erasing the hunted animal from art, the late Paleolithic artist was unconsciously liberating the mind of his community from a regressive fixation and conditioning it for a vitally important cultural reorientation.

Modern art, over and above its aesthetic

Continued on page 73

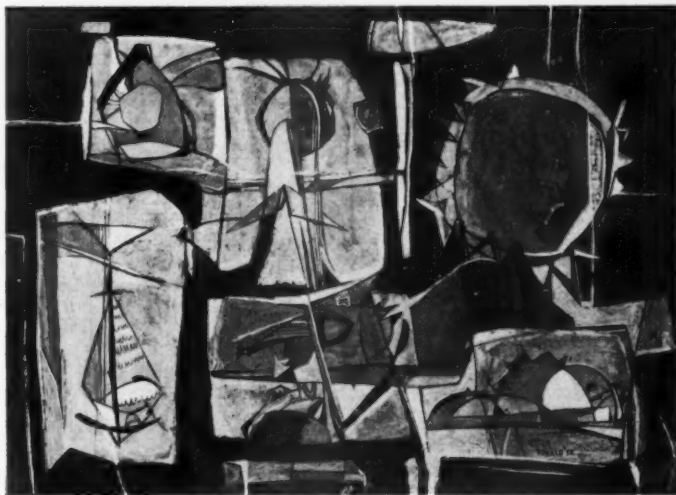
Abstracts at Home

WILLIAM
RONALD

WILLIAM RONALD

The Sportsman

Casein and wax



DURING a panel discussion last year in the Art Gallery of Toronto, entitled "Why Should We Buy Canadian Paintings?", George Robertson, as a writer and critic, put forward the suggestion that more should be done to encourage large department stores to sell original Canadian paintings by novel merchandising methods. As I recall, this idea had

a rather cool reception. I, however, thought that here was a chance to find a better way of bringing non-objective and abstract art to the attention of the public. A group of us, including Ray Mead and myself who were doing such work in Toronto had previously tried to have it commercially displayed through normal methods but had failed. So,



Abstracts at Home

Above, a setting for three works in ink and water colour by Kazuo Nakamura and below, for the painting, Before the Snow, by William Ronald



following the panel discussion, I approached the Robert Simpson Company Limited in Toronto and discovered that they were interested. As a result, in October 1953, this firm sponsored an exhibition of abstract and non-objective paintings, under the title "Abstracts at Home". Included was the work of Jack Bush, Oscar Cahén, Tom Hodgson, Alexandra Luke, Ray Mead, Kazuo Nakamura and myself.

The aim was to persuade the general public that this form of contemporary expression in painting was as much at home within surroundings of everyday living as in an art gallery. To illustrate this, paintings by each of the seven artists were used as the central themes in seven actual rooms which were decorated in both traditional and contemporary settings. Also on view in each room was a photograph of the painter and a short quotation by him regarding his work. The department store then ran a full page advertisement in a newspaper, complete with reproductions of each room setting. The advantages of a promotion of this nature are great, both for the artist and for the store itself, and it is certainly an idea which should be encouraged in other Canadian cities.

A successful aftermath of this showing was the bringing together of the original seven participants and four other artists of like aims, who have now arranged to hold a large exhibition of their own in a commercial art gallery. The additional painters are Walter Yarwood, J. W. G. Macdonald, Hortense Gordon and Harold Towne. This exhibition, entitled "Painters Eleven", is to be held at the Roberts Art Gallery in Toronto in the middle of February, 1954, and there is a tentative plan to send it afterwards to Ottawa and Montreal.

Editor's note: William Ronald, who is 27 years old, first attracted general attention in 1952 when he was one of four Canadian artists to receive Hallmark Art Awards, which are given annually by that United States firm to the winners of an international contest for contemporary designs for Christmas cards. Kazuo Nakamura, whose work is also illustrated above, will be the subject of an article in a forthcoming number of this magazine.

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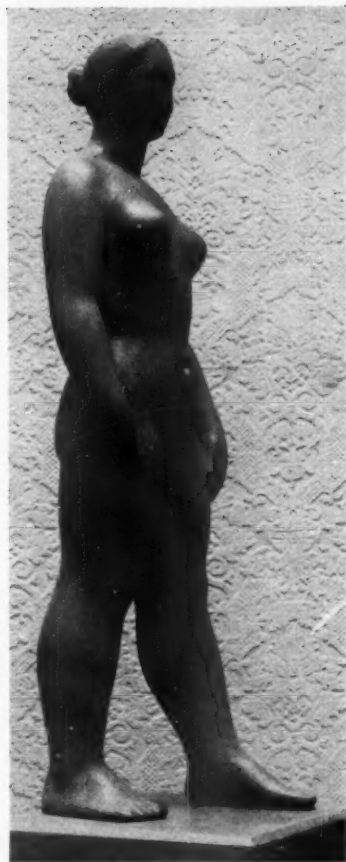
Window for United Church, Leith, Ontario. Design and cartoon by Ellen Simon, a Canadian artist now residing in New York. Execution in glass by Yvonne Williams of Toronto

THERE is no dearth of fair to good sculpture in Quebec today. Some of it was even on view this autumn in the exhibition of works submitted for the 1953 Concours Artistique of the province of Quebec, but the judges apparently looked the other way when they were giving the prizes. They seemed to prefer either the orthodox or the frankly banal. This was particularly so in their choice for first prize. More outstanding among the winners was *Femme nue* by Armand Filion, which won second prize and which we reproduce.

However, when such a fine carver as René Thibault of Quebec's Ecole des Beaux-Arts was among the competitors, how was it possible not to give him at least one of the minor prizes? In his best work, he combines a technical mastery of craftsmanship with a living respect for the traditional religious themes of French-Canadian wood sculpture.

The work of an avowed experimentalist like Marcel Barbeau of Ste-Adèle is frankly too personal and unreal to attract recognition as yet. This artist's entry was a haunting irrationalist vision of man carved like icicles in wood. It represented perhaps the extreme of that rebel streak present among the newer generation of French-Canadian artists. Rightly or wrongly, the judges regarded this example and a few others as being of the "lunatic fringe". But there was some straightforward and far from extreme work which they neglected with much less reason. For example, what did they find lacking in the two submissions we reproduce on the opposite page? The wood sculpture by Rhaoul Hunter is an honest enough rendering of the female form in relation to the organic structure and texture of the block of wood the carver was using. The other work is a decorative combination of mottled stone and metal in an object of religious symbolism which would fit admirably into any of the many new Roman Catholic churches being erected in Quebec.

For the encouragement it gives to the arts through this annual Concours Artistique, the province of Quebec deserves much credit. No other Canadian province has done anything to approach this. So one hopes that the erratic behaviour of the judges in 1953 was a passing error, to be forgotten and forgiven when the



ARMAND FILION
Femme nue debout. Bronze

1954 Concours Artistique is held next autumn.

Already announcements have gone forth as to its character. The theme, in 1954, is to be the decorative arts. These are defined as cabinet-making, goldsmith's craft, weaving and making of church vestments, ceramics, stained glass, sketches for tapestry and similar decorative work. The prizes as usual are generous: first prize, \$1,500.00; second prize, \$1,000.00; three additional prizes of \$500.00 each. It is open to any artist or craftsman resident for the past five years in the province of Quebec and who is a Canadian citizen. Entries close on September 15, 1954. Further information can be obtained from Gérard Morisset, Provincial Museum, Quebec City.

DONALD W. BUCHANAN

Concours Artistique de la Province de Québec



RHAOUL HUNTER

Torso

Pine



MARCEL CHOQUETTE

Le coq de Saint-Pierre

Granite and brass



Left: Totem at Tanoo. Centre: Fall Skedag

A Heritage in D — The Tot o

WUFF

IF THE Haida Indians of the Queen Charlotte Islands of British Columbia had carved their totemic monuments in stone, a great Canadian art would have been assured the permanence it deserves. But they chose to carve in wood, and wood carving exposed to the storms and rains of the Pacific Coast is not a lasting medium, so that today we have come perilously close to losing all but the most meagre samples of this important native sculpture.

Recognition of the art of the Indians of the North Pacific Coast, of which totem poles are but the largest and most striking examples, has been late in coming. But in recent years

it has come, with a rush. There have been several books, by R. B. Inverarity, R. T. Davis, Erna Gunther and Marius Barbeau. There have been major exhibitions, in Montreal, Brooklyn, Colorado Springs and Seattle. These have emphasized that our native sculptors produced one of the world's great primitive art forms. Furthermore, it is not only as *objets d'art* in museums that the art of the totem is appreciated; the totem pole as a distinctive emblem has come to be used liberally to flavour the developing regionalism of Canada's West Coast. Totem trade-marks are now used on theatres, on buses, on license plates. British



re: Fall Skedans. Right: Frontal pole, Skedans

in D e Tot of the Haidas

WUFF



Photos: Provincial Museum of Natural History, Victoria, B.C.

Columbia is fast becoming "Totemland".

The vision an outsider has in his mind of the West Coast is usually one of colourful native villages or of city parks crowded with a wealth of totem poles. But this is far from the true picture. The great numbers of carvings which existed seventy years ago have dwindled away; most of those which remain are fast decaying.

There is little doubt that the characteristic social features of Haida culture are of long standing, and that its characteristic art forms, including some types of totem poles, were developed and nurtured over many centuries

of life on the coast. But there is also little doubt that the coming of the fur traders provided the natives with new ways of getting rich, and stimulated those social forces which found expression in art. The availability of better tools brought technical improvements, with the result that in the trading period Haida art reached its amazing climax. By the late eighteen eighties there stood in some fifteen villages more than three hundred and fifty of the largest and finest totem poles ever carved. But smallpox also came with the traders, and alcohol, and these brought wholesale death and demoralization to the Haidas. The nineties

saw the remnants of the tribe come together in two villages, Skidegate and Masset. The other sites with their great houses and forests of totem poles were left deserted. The nineties also brought missionaries, and in a misdirected zeal to reject heathenism the Haidas chopped down and burned a large number of their totems. Perhaps eighty met destruction this way. The remainder, mostly in the abandoned villages, were left to the slower destructive forces of weathering and boring by insects and parasites. A small number of these, perhaps forty, have since been removed from the villages, mainly to new sites in city parks, where their continuing decay is masked by coats of bright paint. Only about a dozen have found promise of permanent preservation in museums.

The writer spent a month on the Queen Charlotte Islands last summer in an attempt to find out whether or not any of the former carvings had survived in a sound enough condition to be salvaged. Extended visits were paid to several of the places made so familiar by Emily Carr in her paintings and writings, namely Cumshewa, Skedans, Tanoo, and Skidegate.

Skedans is typical of the old villages; there the general impression is one of devastation, dampness and ruin. The beams and timbers of the great houses have collapsed. They lie askew on the ground, moss-covered and rotting. The totem poles have fared only slightly better. Nearly all of the tall, hollow-backed frontal poles of the houses have fallen and are shat-

tered, but several of the stubbier mortuary columns still stand more or less upright on their rotting bases. The carvings which are in open clearings are weathered almost beyond recognition. But most of Skedans has been overrun by the encroaching spruce forest, which hides the ruins and provides some shelter from the elements. On many poles spruce seedlings have taken root and grown, and their expanding roots, like wedges in slow motion, have split apart the decaying cedar poles. All of nature's forces here combine to make soil out of wood.

Only in the most sheltered spots, have the poles remained sound and strong and the carving deep and clear. A few complete examples, a few salvageable sections, these are all that remain fit for recovery. These are magnificent remnants. In these weird surroundings the strength and strange beauty of Haida sculpture breathes life into a scene of ruin.

One is appalled that so many of the carvings have been allowed to rot away. About a dozen complete poles and sections of many more can be rescued from the villages. Not sound enough for display outdoors, they, however, would make a fine showing in museums. Used as models, copies for display in parks could be carved from them.

A sensible start in this direction has recently been made by the Provincial Museum in Victoria. It has a three-year programme to give Victoria in its Thunderbird Park the most permanent and representative outdoor display of totem art in existence. Skilled Kwakiutl In-

Two mortuary poles and house timbers at Skedans



dian carvers are making exact copies of the finest old poles in several tribal styles; the originals are thus released for permanent indoor storage and display. In addition, they have produced in the centre of the park an authentic Kwakiutl house complete with carved house-posts, adzed beams and timbers and painted house-front, with a large heraldic pole standing beside the front door. The native carvers, working in a special workshop in the park, are in themselves an educational attraction for both tourists and students. Their best craftsman is Mungo Martin, of the Fort Rupert

Kwakiutl tribe, whose carvings in Victoria and Vancouver now assure him a prominent place among Canadian artists for generations to come.

The Museum's programme, however, is of limited scope; by itself it cannot accomplish the larger tasks of salvage and preservation required. But it can provide that nucleus of skills, knowledge, and facilities which is essential if a more major programme is to be successfully launched. Interested groups are now at work promoting such development. It is to be hoped that they will be successful.

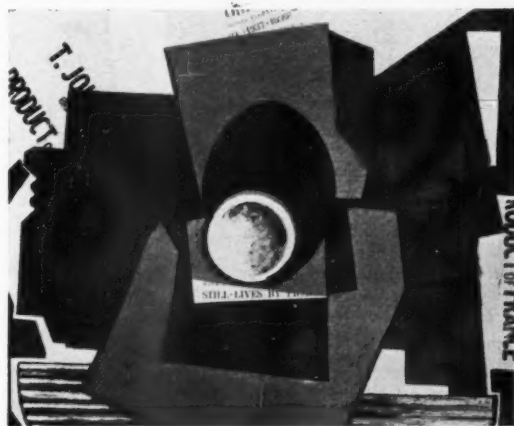
The Flight from Meaning in Painting

MAXWELL BATES

SUSIE FRELINGHUYSEN (U.S.A.)

Composition, 1939

Coloured papers, gouache, charcoal



PREOCCUPATION with processes and techniques profoundly affects contemporary painting. Painters have always been interested in supports, media, handling of paint. The preoccupation with process that is taken for granted today is of a different kind, more aesthetic, perhaps, but less human, — a more abstract kind. The hand of man is less evident in it. Formerly, the painter was concerned about ways of rendering certain effects and the durability of his work. Now, instead of finding technical means to externalize a vision, to inform shapes and colours with a visual idea, the process itself gives the effect. Process is employed for its own sake, for its own visual interest.

By process is meant methods, generally mechanical in the sense that they are at least one remove from hand-work, used to produce

textures and other effects. The use of imprints of cloth and embossed surfaces, enamel poured on canvas, *frottage*, repetitive stamped devices, combing, torn papers pasted to a support are a few examples.

The revolt against illustration helped to establish painting as a thing in itself, without reference to nature for meaning and value. In the eighteen-fifties Gautier expressed the change in vision by his phrase "for the artist the visible world exists". The artist spurned the adventitious aid of association. His most original and valuable work was done on looking at a world minus moral connotations and the sense of the use to which objects, both man-made and natural, are put. He looked at the world, as if for the first time, without prejudice, with an innocent eye. The only ripples on the surface of his mind were caused



ROLOFF BENY (Canada). *Narcissus*, 1946
Line engraving on copper plate with silk and mesh
applied over soft-ground and etched with acid

by a play of sensibility tending to establish rhythmic order in the kaleidoscopic chaos of appearance.

This rejection of moral and other considerations simplified painting. Simplification was followed by abstraction which, in turn, in our day has been followed by the non-objective.

Formerly the surface quality of the paint itself added to the attractiveness of a painting. The painting itself, however, still primarily depicted a subject. Patina and other surface qualities were valued also in sculpture which, too, depicted a subject, usually a figure. Sculpture was never merely "a construction".

Today, however, the visual arts, enormously influenced by the machine, tend to move towards the abstract and the dehumanized. In paintings of this nature, the emphasis is no longer on brushwork as the personal signature of the artist. Interest is rather on new textures and methods. This is most evident in contemporary etchings and engravings. In modern print-making new textures have assumed almost primary importance. Visual devices of this kind are usually obtained by mechanical means.

Texture is the contemporary manner of giving variety and interest within an ensemble. It is the way that suits our time. Too often, however, texture is pursued for its own sake.

This preoccupation with process is recent. It is primarily a technique of accidents as

opposed to skills acquired by practice and with difficulty. Co-ordination of the hand and eye is being superseded by processes giving little difficulty once invented or found.

For many years it has been a common belief of painters and critics that the degree of organization of form and colour, or "colour-form", decides the value of a painting. One among many writers who developed this view was W. H. Wright in his *Modern Painting, Its Tendency and Meaning*. His theory is still widely accepted and it is implied in most books on contemporary painting. These writers do not stand alone, of course. Michelangelo said that art is design. What he may have meant, and indeed may have said, is that art can only be achieved by means of design. The difference is profound.

The view being put forward here is that organization or design is perverted when considered as a thing in itself. Design is a means to an end. It is a form of technique. When presented as an end in itself it is merely decoration. Organization makes parts articulate as a whole; makes each part reinforce the whole. The whole is an idea and has a meaning. Not a meaning that could be conveyed by words, perhaps, but a meaning, nevertheless, and one revealed to best advantage by organization. The meaning is a personal element. Organization is impersonal and universal, not unconnected with the laws of nature. The meaning is an aspect of the inner life of the artist in which the visible world may be reflected. It is the unique element.

A subject is implied whether it be an object, a complex of objects, or non-objective elements informed with meaning. In some of his earlier paintings Derain found "the virtue of objects in the ancient sense of the word". Rouault never uses design for its own sake. Klee had a subject as the end to which all his design and effects contributed. The same may be said for Matisse.

In the eighteenth century nobility of vision was still highly valued, to achieve the sublime the highest aim. Organization (composition) was but a means to these ends.

Grandeur, nobility, the sublime have a moral basis, not being neutral in the complex of good and evil. So although Gautier's "for the artist

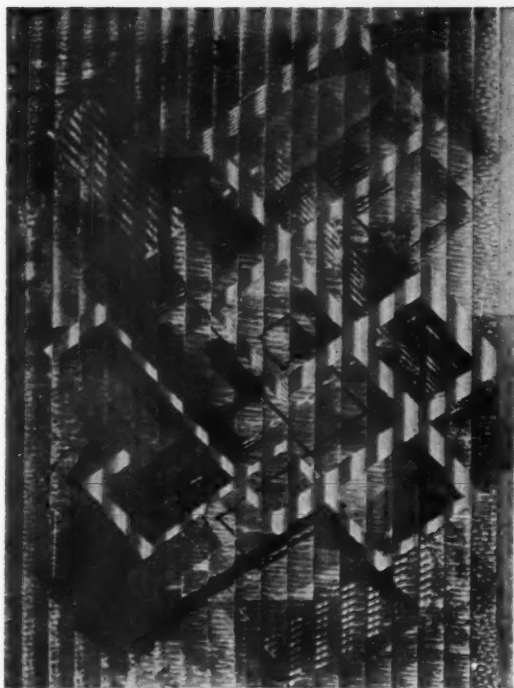
the visible world exists" deserved recognition in his day when much accepted work was sentimental and false, now that the battle for a contemporary vision has long been won we can regard the sentence as a necessary oversimplification.

Organization (including all design) must have a purpose. Painting is not a clever game. The effects produced by processes and techniques, however attractive, are merely decorative unless they enhance something more important; unless they serve that personal vision which, to be important enough to warrant enhancement, must take a stand in the real world of human values.

The world we live in is human at every turn. An art of "process" may be criticized as a lack of will to face this real world.

Our culture (ultimately our sense of values in life) is unstable. There is, therefore, a strong tendency to avoid facing the involved world of human oppositions and to make interesting (and neutral) effects. But art is concerned with values and with what is fitting in a situation (the final basis of taste). The artist has the duty of helping to establish new values and of breaking up those which are no longer valid and have become obstructive. Thus the creative artist is the most contemporaneous type of man, extremely sensitive to his own time. In an age of conflict he may choose to turn to an unreal but more satisfying world of his own or to an unreal neutral world. On the other hand he may try, in his small way, to stabilize our culture by remaining fully conscious of those values that are truly contemporary. There is nothing political or propagandist in this attitude. The artist's scope is beyond politics. It is simply that an artist, if he is to have a world outlook, must accept being a part of all things and responsible; otherwise he seeks isolation and is irresponsible. This last is the outlook that fails to communicate because the necessary desire and sympathy are absent.

The artist who seeks isolation through intellectual pride has no room for sympathy. This negative attitude turns to design and process for their own sake. The slight decorative quality achieved is insufficient justification for an art of the void.



IRENE RICE PEREIRA (U.S.A.). *Rose Flux*, 1952
Two painted, textured glasses superimposed over each other and over a painted gesso ground

JEAN (HANS) ARP (France). *Composition*, 1937
Torn paper, with India ink wash



Community Arts for Vancouver

THE Community Arts Council of Vancouver is one of the multitude of art groups the power of whose collective voice, gaining strength during and following the years of war, helped to bring about the formation of the now famous Royal Commission on the Arts, Letters and Sciences. And, in its small way, this Community Arts Council is, to its own area, what the proposed Canada Council may one day be to the country as a whole.

Back in 1945, the Junior League of Vancouver completed what was perhaps the first comprehensive study ever to have been made of the state of the arts in any North American community. This was published under the title *Arts and Our Town*. The picture it gave of the arts in Vancouver at that time was similar in kind, if not in scope, to that concerning Canada as a whole presented later in the Massey Report. It showed the same diversity of groups, the same lack of relationship between them, the same types of overlapping, the same existence of gaps. It depicted that struggle for survival known to artists and art organizations across the country. The survey committee, foreshadowing the thinking of the Royal Commission, visualized a co-ordinating council as the answer to some of these problems. As a result, when the survey was presented on May 1, 1946 to the mayor of Vancouver at a large public meeting, the first community arts council on this continent came into being.

At first, the original leaders of the Council had few clear conceptions as to the course to be followed. They could borrow ideas from the American welfare council movement or from the Arts Council of Great Britain, but there was no ready-made plan available for them to adopt. They had to devise their own pattern.

Thinking alone, however, would not make the Council work. To be effective in serving the community, it needed the membership of all the arts groups. It also needed the support, both moral and financial, of the Vancouver public. In order to fulfil its major functions of stimulation and publicity, of co-ordination and the prevention of overlapping in the arts, its purposes had to be fully understood by all. Demonstration was the only answer. The Council started publishing a news bulletin. Its successor, the monthly *C.A.C. News Calendar*, still provides one of the Council's basic membership services.

Spurred on by advice given by Dr. Ifor Evans of the Arts Council of Great Britain, the Coun-

cil then undertook a series of special projects. The first two of these aimed to fill gaps; these were the formation of the Friends of Chamber Music Society and of the Community Children's Theatre; both these soon became autonomous groups functioning as members of the Council. Three major projects followed of a co-ordinating nature: "Arts and Our Town", held in October 1948, (a month long presentation of plays and concerts); "Design for Living", in November 1949, (an exhibition of household arts from architecture to furniture, which gave British Columbia artists and craftsmen an opportunity to show their work, and drew some fourteen thousand people in three weeks); "The First Symposium of Canadian Contemporary Music" in May 1950, which is mentioned in the Massey Report as the only venture of its kind on record in this country.

In the autumn of 1951 the Council started the project "Community Arts for Children", designed to develop and supply leaders who would promote the arts among the children of Vancouver. This programme is now in its third year.

Perhaps the most far reaching and successful of the major projects to date is "British Columbia Book Week". In November 1952 it drew three thousand adults and children to participate in a week of literary activities.

In addition to its regular services, the Council has undertaken a number of co-operative endeavours during the past few months in the civic arts, the graphic arts, puppetry, dancing and the crafts. Among these was the co-sponsorship of an architectural symposium on garden design, a series of lectures and demonstrations on ballet appreciation and a "Young Canada Book Week".

Today, the Council's paramount concern is to obtain a proper civic auditorium and adequate library facilities. In its drive for support of these two major projects, the Council has had the backing not only of its own 120 active affiliated groups, but also of some thirty non-member organizations of major community importance. Largely because of this public support, the estimates for a new, and sorely needed, central library for Vancouver have now been included in Vancouver's five-year civic improvement plan. This December the auditorium was presented to the voters for decision as a separate money by-law. The auditorium is envisaged as the first step in the creation of a civic entertainment centre with convention halls, sports facilities, a small theatre and museum with room for art, scientific and

Continued on page 72

Recent
Acquisitions
by Art
Galleries
and
Museums
in Canada

LUCAS CRANACH

Venus

The National Gallery of Canada



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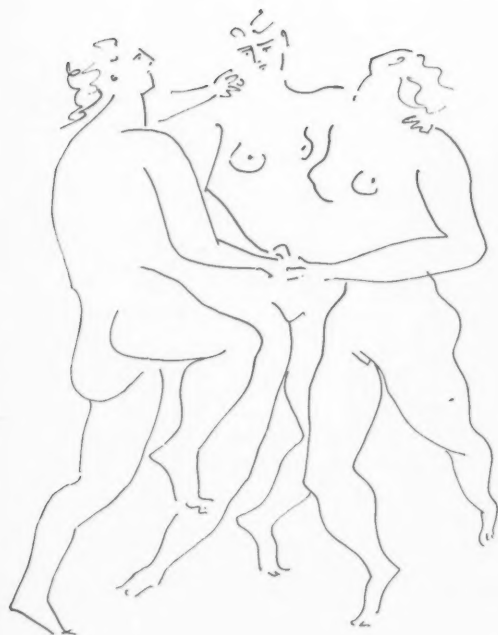


***The National
Gallery
of Canada***

REMBRANDT
Bathsheba at Her Toilet

*Below left: PICASSO
Three nudes
Pen drawing*

*Below right: MARC CHAGALL
The Artist and His Model
Gouache*

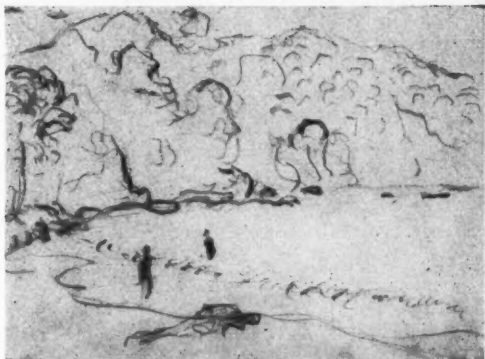


Picasso





J. W. MORRICE
Landscape, Tangiers



J. W. MORRICE
Landscape, Trinidad
Pencil drawing
Gift of David Morrice,
Montreal



PAUL-ÉMILE
BORDUAS
*Sous le vent
de l'île*



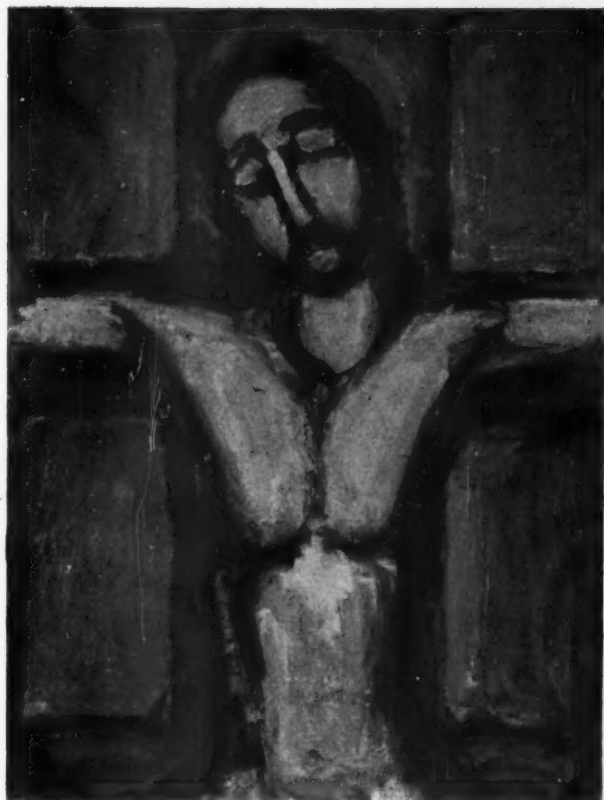
Marble stele. Chinese, Tang Dynasty, A.D. 678

***The Royal
Ontario Museum
of Archaeology***

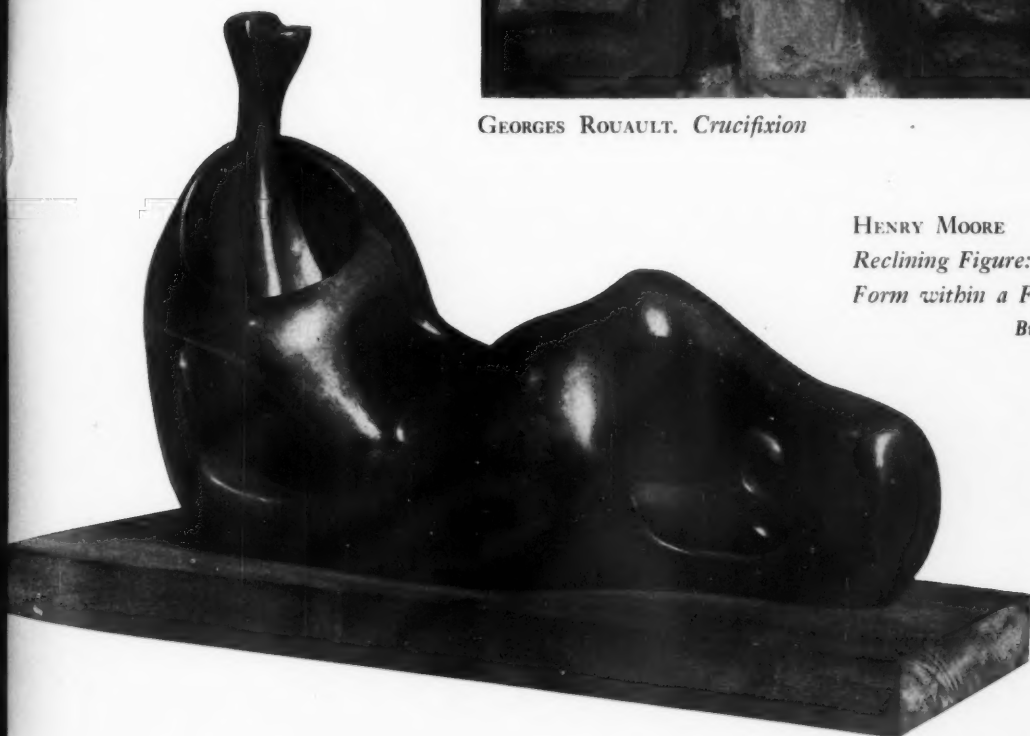
Stone sculpture of Bodhisattva from Tien Lung S



*The Montreal
Museum of Fine Arts*



GEORGES ROUAULT. *Crucifixion*



HENRY MOORE
*Reclining Figure:
Form within a Form*
Bronze



*The
Provincial
Museum
of Quebec*

JEAN-PAUL LACROIX. *La femme à la fleur.* Aquatint

GORDON

FRANÇOIS
AND THOMAS
BAILLARGÉ

*Old pulpit from
Baie-Saint-Paul*

*Carved and
gilded wood*





GORDON SMITH. *Wet Night*

MARIAN SCOTT. *Group.* Gift of Robert A. Laidlaw, Toronto



*The
Vancouver
Art
Gallery*

*The Art Gallery
of Toronto*



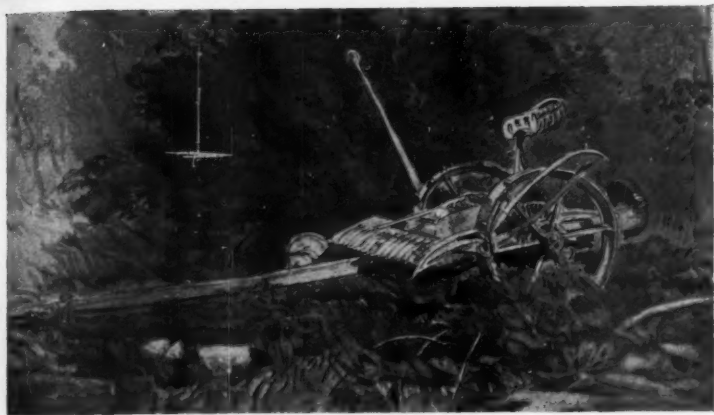
GEORGES ROUAULT. *Le chirurgien*



MARINO MARINI. *Horsemen*

RAOUL DUFY. *Port du Hævre*





DANIEL FOWLER

The Mower

Water colour



JACQUES
DE TONNANCOUR

Willows



WILL OGILVIE

*Rock Forms,
Georgian Bay*

*Ink and
water colour*

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Goodridge Roberts, A.R.C.A.

M. H. Shreck

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DOMINION GALLERY

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A room from the "Design for Living" exhibition presented by the Community Arts Council, Vancouver.

COMMUNITY ARTS FOR VANCOUVER . . .

Continued from page 62

historical clubs and related activities. Passage of the auditorium by-law was, of course, the first essential. A citizen's auditorium committee was therefore organized for the campaign, in which, quite naturally, the Arts Council was active.

When the voting recently took place, approval was given the by-law. The vote, however, was so close that it is clear that, without the effort the Arts Council and its supporters put into the campaign, the financing of the long-awaited auditorium might have been postponed indefinitely.

But, of all the many functions of the Arts Council, co-ordination remains most important. This is seen in the work of the three established "sections". Through these sections, representatives of the groups actively engaged in the various arts meet monthly to share common problems and make joint plans. For example, the drama section runs an annual one-act play festival. The literary section holds competitions for one-act plays and has now added poetry and short-story competitions. Co-operation between the drama and literary sections makes possible presentation of the winning plays. The music section has held two demonstrations called "Panorama of Music".

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Y
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NIGHT CLASSES FOR ADULTS. SATURDAY CLASSES FOR CHILDREN. FOR DETAILS WRITE REGISTRAR

As many of its participating groups have as many as six hundred members, the Council, through its own individual subscribers and affiliate groups, represents some eighteen thousand persons. Its interests are proportionately wide, covering everything from community planning and industrial design to symphony, ballet, drama, prose and poetry. On the one hand it seeks acceptance of the highest of professional standards, on the other hand it must keep the needs of the hobbyist in view; the Community Arts Council belongs to the people of Vancouver and its task is to help them enrich their lives through the medium of the arts.

MOIRA SWEENEY

EAST IS WEST . . .

Continued from page 51

appeal, has a similar and equally vital task to perform for our society. In confronting the public with new forms of imagery, it exposes cultural inertia to energizing waves of cultural vitality, intensifying awareness of change and promoting historical adaptability. In contributing to this end, the artist becomes a social and spiritual, as well as an aesthetic, leader. Like many social and spiritual leaders of the past, he sometimes has to bear the brunt of misunderstanding and temporary rejection. That, if necessary, he bears these pressures without swerving from the creative realities of his time, is the mark of his moral integrity and his deep allegiance to the welfare of his society.

CONTRIBUTORS

Walter Abell, a former editor of *Canadian Art*, is now on the staff of Michigan State College.

Maxwell Bates is an architect and artist of Calgary.

Wilson Duff is an anthropologist with the Provincial Museum, Victoria, B.C.

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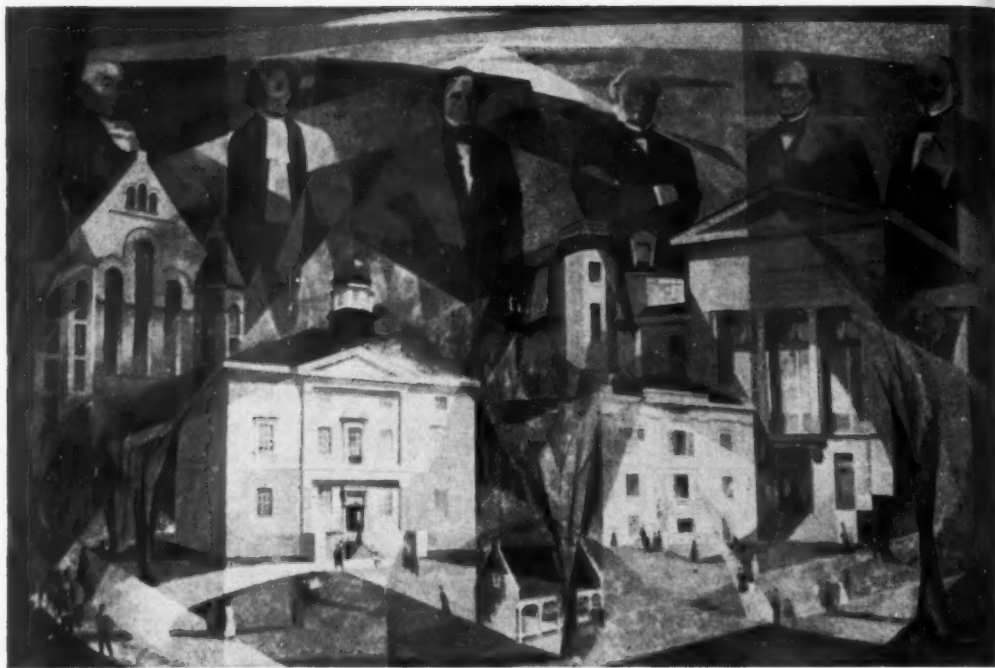
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R. YORK WILSON. *Mural in the main reading-room, Redpath Library, McGill University, Montreal*

COAST TO COAST IN ART

Two Important Murals in Montreal

The competition for the mural for the end wall of the main reading-room in the new extension to the Redpath Library of McGill University (Architects: McDougal, Smith & Fleming; J. Roxburgh Smith, R.C.A.) was handled by the Royal Canadian Academy and the sketch for the winning design, by R. York Wilson, R.C.A., was on view at the Academy's 74th Annual Exhibition held in Toronto this December. According to the terms of the competition, early benefactors and administrators of the University had to be included and York Wilson shows six of them across the top: James McGill, Bishop Mountain, Sir William Dawson, Principal Meredith, Chancellor Day and William Molson. They preside, like memories of the past, over the campus in which present and past are mingled. Some of the buildings, such as the original Arts Building of the 1860's and James McGill's cottage, have vanished like the worthies above them. The artist has kept his colour keyed back to earthy browns and stone greys, with blue accents, and has attacked his problem of composition with some ingenuity, tying together men and buildings,

past and present, and animating the design with arbitrary shafts of overlapping light and shadow. The mural is 12 feet high by 18 feet wide.

Stanley Cosgrove delayed his flight to Europe (to begin his year on a Canadian government fellowship) so that he might finish the fresco he was painting for the entrance to the new philosophy and science wing of Collège de Saint-Laurent, near Montreal. The mural, completed early in December, is 10 feet 10 inches wide by 9 feet 9 inches high, and the design is made up of five figures 7 feet 6 inches tall; the centre one, a female, represents wisdom, and the others depict young male students. At first it was suggested to the painter that the theme should be scholastic philosophy coming to the help of science, but he rejected this idea as too literary and when he began his preliminary drawings one of his first thoughts was to avoid Greek garments as a hackneyed tradition. Wisdom herself is static and calm; the rhythm is in the hands and arms of the students, who are painted in different colours to represent the elements, blue for the air, red for fire, brown for earth and green for water.

Winnipeg Art Gallery Has New Director

A new director of the Winnipeg Art Gallery was recently appointed. He is Dr. Ferdinand Eckhardt. Formerly with the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna, where he was in charge of developing a programme of art education for museums in Austria, Dr. Eckhardt was invited by the State Department in Washington to make a study of United States museums last year. Several of his books have been published in Vienna; he also prepared a volume on the miniatures from the Hapsburg Collection in Vienna, which was published by the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.

Picture Loan Scheme Launched in Vancouver

The Vancouver Art Gallery now has a picture loan scheme, launched and managed by its women's auxiliary. Members of the gallery may draw from this collection which includes painters from all sections of Canada; for a rental fee of one per cent of a picture's purchase price, with a minimum of one dollar, they may enjoy paintings in the intimacy of their own houses or apartments for one month. One day each month the collection is open for returns and new loans;

pictures which have outworn the interest of borrowers are replaced by new ones. The scheme was conceived, not to provide low-rental wall furnishings but to give the borrower an opportunity to test his choice and form his taste. To admire a picture in a gallery exhibition may be quite a different thing from finding it a continuously satisfying companion at home. To prevent a member from continuously renting the painting to which he or she has become attached, a maximum of three months' rental in a twelve month period is allowed. When a purchase is made the rental paid is deductible from the price of the picture. Gallery-goers like the idea; the day the new scheme was launched, two thirds of the collection of some one hundred pictures found their way into Vancouver homes.

Painting in the Park

Such success attended the Vancouver experiment of "painting in the park" by children that a mimeographed outline of this plan has been prepared so that groups in other cities can adopt it also. Last year 530 Vancouver children attended painting classes which were held outdoors in 10 of the parks of that city. This unusual project

STANLEY COSGROVE

*Mural in the Collège
de Saint-Laurent,
near Montreal*



Photo: Micheline and Yves Tanguay

was sponsored by the Federation of Canadian Artists, B.C. Region, and will be held again in 1954.

Ten qualified art teachers guided the children who came in informal classes. Direct painting was encouraged and mixed media was also employed. Each child received a kit which included a portable drawing-board, paint and brushes. These remained their property after the classes were over.

Information as to how to organize similar painting-in-the-park groups in your city can be obtained by writing to the director of the Vancouver project, Ralph A. Hanslow, 143 West 26th Ave., Vancouver 10.

New Galleries in Halifax

Until 1951 the city of Halifax had no fireproof gallery or room in which exhibitions of pictures could be hung. Now it has two which, although small, are quite adequate. The Halifax Memorial Library, which was opened in 1951, contains an art room with 12 movable screens for hanging pictures. A small annual budget is assigned to this room allowing about six exhibitions a year to be brought to the city. Most, but not all, exhibitions are obtained through the National Gallery of Canada.

More recently, in October, 1953, the art gallery of Dalhousie University, situated in the new arts and administration building, was opened by the distinguished British art critic, Eric Newton. This gallery which is about fifty feet by twenty feet has available wall space of about one hundred running feet and is well lighted. The plans of the committee in charge include the holding of both travelling and local exhibitions; the establishment



One of the two new public art galleries in Halifax is in the Halifax Memorial Library, shown above

of a permanent collection of water colours representing, in time, it is hoped, all of the best Canadian water-colour painters; the sponsoring of gallery talks and other lectures; the development of a circulating collection of 11 inch by 15 inch reproductions and of a series of good large reproductions of old and modern masters to be carefully framed and hung in various university buildings. Funds for these purposes totalling about one thousand dollars have been given by the class of 1915 and the alumnae of the University.

Federation of Canadian Artists Active in Edmonton

Art workshop meetings are being energetically sponsored by the Edmonton branch of the Federation of Canadian Artists this winter. Working groups are divided into figure painting, sculpture



Painting in the Park

Children in one of the summer classes organized by the Federation of Canadian Artists, B.C. Region

and serigraph. Also general meetings are held which include discussions of new trends in painting and demonstrations of techniques. This revival of activity by the federation in Edmonton is being directed by that branch's new chairman, George Weber, and its secretary, Jean Richards.

Sutherland-Moore Exhibition in Vancouver

The Vancouver Art Gallery during the past autumn had the only Canadian showing of the important exhibition of the works of Graham Sutherland and Henry Moore, organized by Boston's Institute of Contemporary Art and shown in eight centres on this continent. The exhibition comprised some fifty paintings, water colours and drawings by Graham Sutherland, including Vancouver's own *Thorn and Wall*, 1946, and fourteen sculptures by Henry Moore. Moore, of course, is already fairly well known on this side of the Atlantic, but the emphasis this exhibition gave to Sutherland allows this outstanding British painter to obtain the recognition he deserves on this continent. The selection was well chosen to reveal, to experienced eyes and open minds, the true stature of this artist, but it is doubtful whether he will readily find the wider acceptance accorded to the sculptor. Moore, at least in his earlier work for which he is still best known in this country, is relaxing in his forms, even if difficult in interpretation for some; Sutherland by temperament is nervous, groping, tentative; his colour, always used for psychological effect, is frequently acid in its combinations, and his imagery ranges from the engagingly mysterious to what in his later pictures is the deeply disquieting. His work, of course, separates into phases which are distinguished thematically as well as stylistically. He discovers a form which has for him deep symbolic significance and this becomes the theme, explored and expanded, for a whole series of studies. In this exhibition were seen representatives of the winding-road and twisted-root-and-branch group, the Crucifixion and thorn images, the palm, the vine and cigale series, and finally, strangest of all, those articulated and standing forms, images not animal, not vegetable, not human, neither wholly organic or wholly constructed, but profoundly disturbing in their sense of relevant presence. The Moore section of the show unfortunately included none of the drawings or

water colours, and the sculptures, necessarily small, gave one only a glimpse of this artist rather than an opportunity to become truly acquainted.

Enterprising Art Venture on West Coast

A unique gallery on the West Coast has recently opened in Vancouver's west end, close to the city's central down-town area. Devoted to the sale of contemporary Canadian paintings, the gallery also hopes to foster a closer relationship between the art of eastern and western Canada. Ronald Kelly, the young man behind the project, who is himself a painter, has hand picked a really good collection in which established painters, as well as younger lesser known artists, from all parts of Canada, are included. Some western painters are better represented than they usually are in exhibitions on the West Coast. The gallery is situated in an old house, tastefully and simply decorated, the rooms of which provide a fine and intimate atmosphere for displaying and viewing pictures. Early indications are that the Vancouver public is ready to give its support to this venture.

Art Gallery of Hamilton Opens New Building

The new Art Gallery of Hamilton was officially opened on December 12 by His Excellency the Governor General of Canada, the Right Hon. Vincent Massey, C.H. It is a spacious building, fully modern in detail and equipment with rooms all arranged on ground level so that there are no stairs to climb. Besides being open every day except Mondays, there is also a special evening programme every Thursday, free to the public, when art films are shown, lectures given and demonstrations conducted.

The inaugural exhibition, open until January 26, was a retrospective selection of Canadian paintings, with many prized canvases on loan from public galleries and private collectors. This has given Hamilton its first opportunity to see at one time under one roof many of the more famous examples of Canadian art.

For the remainder of the season, an interesting schedule of exhibitions is announced. This includes British paintings from the Massey Collection and American water colours, drawings and prints from the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

Entrance view of the new Art Gallery of Hamilton



NEW BOOKS ON THE ARTS

THE HEART OF A PEACOCK. By Emily Carr. Edited by Ira Dilworth. 234 pp.; line drawings by the author. Toronto: Oxford University Press. \$3.50.

Emily Carr, if the present almost annual output of her posthumously published works continues, will soon have as large a public for her writings as she deservedly has for her paintings. As we now know, she was no untutored artist who suddenly arose in isolation in Victoria; actually she had spent many years previously in art schools abroad. So also, as a writer, she was no naive beginner. As Ira Dilworth reveals in his preface, Emily Carr, while living in Victoria, followed (although she hid the fact from her friends) a course in short-story writing given by an American correspondence school. Her most interesting tale of Indian life, *The Shadow of the Eagle*, he believes to be a revision of an earlier story which she submitted as an exercise in this course.

When she writes about the birds she had tamed (there was one famous crow, and also, most remarkably, a vulture) her prose is usually fresh and absorbing. But her more contrived work is less successful, as we find here in one short story, *Lilies*, about human relationships. Perhaps her most amusing anecdotes are about the errant antics of Woo, her mischievous and long-lived monkey. The simple, humane but candid humour she uses in describing this and other of her pets is characteristic of the true Emily Carr. This same approach to animals appears, in a few instances, in her painting. For example, there is *Zunoqua of the Cat Village*, a picture in which the enquiring heads of a dozen wandering cats emerge from the overgrown grass and forest fringe of a deserted Indian village. Personally, it has always seemed to me to be the most humanly attractive of all her paintings. D.W.B.

THOMAS BEWICK. By Montague Weekly. 219 pp.; 30 ill. London and Toronto: Oxford University Press. \$3.25.

Thomas Bewick, the bi-centenary of whose birth we observed last year, is one of England's finest graphic artists. He brought to perfection the art of wood engraving, a method of reproducing pictorial matter which had been neglected for generations before his advent. Until his influence brought a change, the wood block had been considered only as a poor relation to the more flashy techniques of metal engraving. In Bewick's day all the illustrations used in books, pamphlets or newspapers had to be engraved by hand on a plate or block of some sort, either of metal or wood. Today almost all printing of this nature is produced by purely mechanical means, except in Europe where the art of hand-engraving still enjoys an honoured place alongside the latest methods of photo-engraving.

In England, thanks to Thomas Bewick, this useful art of wood engraving has reached a high peak of excellence and the group of gifted people who practise it are all more or less indebted to Bewick for lifting it from the crude state in which he found it.

How he performed this feat and under what circumstances are well set forth by Montague Weekly. His excellent book is by far the best one on the subject, not only on Bewick the artist-craftsman but also on Bewick the man and his relation to the times in which he found himself. LAURENCE HYDE

A DIRECTORY OF ANTIQUE FURNITURE. By F. Lewis Hinckley, 35 pp. of text + 353 pp. of plates. New York: Crown Publishers. \$10.00.

The greater part of the literature on furniture has been published within the last fifty years, and today the serious student has access to a vast amount of material. In fact, there is a very strong body of opinion that at the present time there is no room for further publications unless they cover a specialized field, or have something original to say. We may not be in agreement with this opinion, and if we are not we can gratefully accept the fruits of Mr. Hinckley's labours as set down in this lavishly illustrated book.

Mr. Hinckley is interested in the interrelation of furniture designs in general, and the influence of the English and French schools of design in particular. His essays on the spread of English and French styles to other European countries and their overseas territories in the West Indies and the Far East form a useful if brief introduction to the illustrations. His essay attempting to show that a definite style of Irish furniture exists, other than the type usually accepted as being of Irish origin, is not convincing however, and the statement he quotes as being made by the National Museum of Ireland, that "no decisive criteria have been evolved for discriminating what is Irish and what is English", remains true. Undoubtedly much furniture was manufactured in Ireland during the eighteenth century, but, as in the case of contemporary silver and glass, to distinguish between Irish and English productions on stylistic evidence alone calls for a discrimination which few if any can achieve.

The illustrations are on the whole good, although several are too small to be of benefit to the serious student. A number of them, for example Nos. 526, 534, 535, 540, 541, 594, would have gained in usefulness if a greater degree of accuracy in dating had been adopted by putting early, middle, or late before the rather indefinite eighteenth-century date. The volume is admirably produced and will be a useful reference book to the small dealer and those interested in the exciting if difficult task of collecting old furniture.

T. F. STONES

PAUSE—A Sketch Book. By Emily Carr. 148 pp.; 39 ill. Toronto: Clarke Irwin & Company. \$3.00.

There are a few tears, much humour, and great courage in this poignant little book of Emily Carr's. As a young art student in London, ill health brought on by overwork, forced her to go to a sanatorium for a year and a half. This is her story of those

eighteen months, told with a pen as deft and compelling as her brush. Because "San" rules did not permit any strain, either emotional or physical, she could not paint. Her little sketch book was the only outlet for a mind and talent that no illness could subdue. Her own loneliness gave her, for one so young, a deep understanding of her fellow patients and their need for a companionship such as hers. With gaiety and humour she brought them escape from dull routine and morbid fears of their illness. Never unkind, she poked gentle fun at herself, her nurses and doctors and makes you feel that you have known them all. Her little snatches of poems with amusing illustrative sketches are as touching as the whistling of a small boy in the dark, and her animal sketches are witty. Wanting to add the one thing she felt her native British Columbia lacked she decided to bring back to Canada some of the beautiful little song birds of England. She filched whole nests of small birds from the bushes and fed them by hand; one of her most appealing sketches shows her feeding these open-mouthed fledglings at five in the morning, their nest on a chair beside her bed. R.McE.

LEGER. By Katherine Kub. 121 pp.; 67 ill. + 4 in colour. Urbana: University of Illinois Press. \$5.75.

Fernand Leger, the painter of the "mechanical object", has himself written such precise statements about his purposes that anyone preparing his biography faces a difficult task, for it is almost impossible for a critic to surpass the clarity of the artist's own writings. Katherine Kuh has, however, neatly avoided such pitfalls by preparing a book which is not so much a biography as it is an annotated catalogue. She mainly limits herself to describing the character of the paintings reproduced, with particular reference to Leger's expressed aims, which she underlines by ample quotation. She also has contributed, by way of a concluding summary, a few chapters of a more general nature. What she writes is sound enough. Yet the phrases quoted directly from Leger are what give the book its sparkle. For example, "Nowadays a work of art must bear comparison with any manufactured object". Also, "I was never interested in copying the machine; I invented images of machines." Finally, of his sojourn in America (Leger lived for a while both in New York and Montreal): "Bad taste, strong colours—it is all here for the painters to organize and to get the full use of its power." D.W.B.

RENOWN AT STRATFORD. By Tyrone Guthrie and Robertson Davies. Drawings by Grant MacDonald. 127 pp. + 24 plates (23 in colour). Toronto: Clarke, Irwin & Company Limited. \$3.50.

Recently published, this is an extremely satisfying account of that theatrical miracle, the Shakespearean Festival held at Stratford, Ontario, last summer. For those who made the pilgrimage, Tyrone Guthrie's simple and dramatic account gives an insight into the immensity of the organizational problems involved, also of the gap, between the old world and the new, in theatrical knowledge of Shakespearean production.



The Heart of a Peacock

By EMILY CARR

With line-drawings by the author

Edited by IRA DILWORTH

This is a miscellany of the late Emily Carr's writings that will give much pleasure to admirers of her previous books, as well as to those who have yet to be introduced to Emily Carr the writer. It is a collection of word-sketches suggested by the most compelling interest in the artist's life apart from her painting—her animal and bird friends—and four stories that reveal a new side to her literary skill. Like her previous books, these sketches and stories were inspired by her rich sense of the comic and by her experiences of loyalty, courage, and unselfishness, in the people and animals she knew. *The Heart of a Peacock* is a worthy successor to the books that have earned Miss Carr a position of eminence among the leading Canadian writers: *Klee Wyck* (\$2.50), *The Book of Small* (\$2.50), *The House of All Sorts* (\$3.00), and *Growing Pains* (\$3.50).

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What we saw and heard are recalled and illuminated for us by Robertson Davies' scholarly comments on the actors and the director. This account relates the actors' performances to the play and the play to Shakespeare and his theatre, a very necessary and useful orientation for those whose reading of Shakespeare and history may be sketchy. Those who were unable to be at Stratford last summer will catch from this book some of the actual thrill of experience, which the performances of *Richard The Third* and *All's Well That Ends Well* gave the audiences who were there.

The colour drawings by Grant Macdonald are outstandingly successful; they give not only the visual effect of the actor in costume, but also a strong feeling of the character in the play as that particular actor played it.

The tent itself—that famous tent which housed it all, and the stage within it, a modern Shakespearean stage, are easily seen and understood from the descriptions in this volume.

Whether to catch up on what has been missed, or to underline what could not be forgotten, this is a book to own.

JULIA MURPHY

HERCULES SEGHERS. By Leo C. Collins. 149 pp. + 112 plates. University of Chicago Press. \$20.00.

With the publication of Mr. Collins' monograph we have at last been given an opportunity to appreciate the achievement of that strange isolated genius of the seventeenth century, Hercules Seghers.

Receptive on the one hand to tradition and on

the other to the most liberal influences of his day, Seghers was an innovator whose experiments carried him far ahead of his time. In landscape painting and print-making where his especial genius lay, he broke new trails for succeeding generations to explore and he is today accepted as one of the most important forerunners of modern art. How well he deserves this place may be judged from the influence his work had on Rembrandt, with whom he is most closely associated, and on that rich school of Dutch landscape painters through whom his heritage passed on to the English and through them later to the French. We think of Turner, of the early Corot and the early Palmer, of Rodolphe Bresdin, of van Gogh and others as we look at these reproductions, which cover the whole range of his art.

Although Seghers had, it seems, no popular success during his lifetime, he was always held in esteem by those of his contemporaries who were either artists or connoisseurs. Rembrandt, we are told, possessed no fewer than eight of his landscapes. But while Seghers' paintings were neglected and lost sight of in the eighteenth and greater part of the nineteenth centuries, his etchings from the seventeenth century on have been almost continuously sought after by discriminating amateurs, and today they are among the rarest and most desired of all old master prints.

If the influence which Seghers exerted on landscape painting was great, that which he had on etching and print-making has even yet not been fully appraised. Until his arrival in Haarlem, etching, which had never been customary in the Netherlands, was at the close of the sixteenth century virtually a forgotten art there. But twenty years or so before Rembrandt etched his first plate Seghers had revived the art in Holland, bringing back with him from Rome a new "soft ground" technique which he had learnt from Adam Elsheimer. With this and other techniques which he discovered and used with imagination and daring, he aimed at producing printed pictures in which the pictorial qualities would be as full as those in painting, and he achieved unsurpassed effects of a strange and haunting beauty. By producing granulated effects similar to aquatint, by pressing linen into his wax grounds, by printing in white on black and in inks of various colours, by making impressions on fabrics and stained papers, and by adding colour by hand, he explored the art to its furthest limits and "there is in the entire field of etching nothing which he did not foreshadow." Only when the final pictorial solution eluded him in this medium did he turn to pigment alone to solve his problems. In such instances his etchings become a preparation for some of his greatest paintings and "it is the painter who achieves what the etcher had intended."

It is also in the etchings that we see most clearly Seghers' conception of the world, his search by means of anatomical and atmospheric exploration for the reality beneath appearance, his "bold attempt at emulating creation" to form anew his own world out of the "chaotic disarray" of nature.

Despite the lack of documented material, Mr. Collins' careful research and long devotion to his

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subject has resulted in a monumental monograph which, free from distracting biographical details and psychological considerations, allows us to judge the artist through his work alone, which emerges from these pages "as one of the great manifestations of art."

K.M.F.

PAUL KLEE. By *Carola Giedion-Welcker*. Translated by *Alexander Gode*. 156 pp., 151 ill. + 13 in colour. New York: Viking Press. (Canadian distributors: The Macmillan Company of Canada). \$4.50.

If you are to get the best out of this book you will have to be patient and forbearing for it is exasperating on two important counts: the text is often murky and the printing of the plate leaves much to be desired, many of them, indeed, are so muddy as to be worthless.

Everyone will agree that "going through Klee's world is a strange and wonderful adventure for both mind and heart"; we won't all follow the writer when she talks about the "vital core of spirituality". We may have different values and a different understanding of that word. And what could she possibly mean when she says: "Painting had become a magic art that could transmute reality" and when she talks about a "self-sufficient pictorial language of colour which vibrates entirely beyond the realm of reality and may best be compared to music"? What is reality, and isn't music real?

Apart from nonsense of this kind (some of the fault may be the translator's) which doesn't help us much in our understanding and enjoyment of an exceedingly individual painter, Mrs. Giedion-Welcker's essay is full of knowledge and insight and she gives us valuable clues. She knew the artist and his family and she discusses Klee's life and work with authority and sympathy, quoting from his own writings, showing his relationship to the other painters of his generation, speaking of him as a student and as a teacher, pointing out the importance of music in his life, discussing his philosophy and his techniques.

It is easier to forgive the obscurities of her style (once you are well launched, you don't mind them so much) than the smudginess of the reproductions, but there are plenty of them and when they're not too muffled they do convey the imaginative power of the man of magic who believed that he lived "somewhat nearer the heart of creation than normal—and yet not nearly close enough". The illustrations of the works of other men with whom he had affinity are useful, Ensor, Morgenstern, Beardsley, Kubin, at the beginning; then later, Marc, Kandinsky, Miro, Picasso. But Klee made his own world and his small maps of it, his symbols and pictorial equations, his poetry in runes whose meanings we know even if we cannot utter them, his music of line and colour that we don't have to translate, are our continuing delight. R.A.

Since our list *Where to Exhibit* was presented in our last number, the dates for the spring exhibition of the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts have been changed. This exhibition will now open on March 1 and work should be sent in to the Museum for submission to the jury before February 5.

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THE ART FORUM

Dear Sir:

Will George Elliott tell his readers just when, where and how, amateur art becomes professional art? Does he infer, in his article in the autumn number, that professionals are born, not made? Or, must an "amateur" (in his opinion) be forever stigmatized as such, because in his early years he had neither the opportunity nor the means to study in the "professional" field? For several years past the so-called "professionals" have been preaching that "every child is an artist" and that art in everyday life is the only means of accepting the professional artist into the same status that other professionals hold; this, instead of his retiring into a bohemian world of his own where his talents are underrated and little understood. Now that Canadians as a whole are beginning to accept these preachings and teachings, and are "having fun" trying to be creative and artistic, we read articles like George Elliott's "What have Amateurs done to Canadian Art?" inferring that the amateurs are spoiling the prospects for professionals!

Where do we go from here? What would he have us do?

Yours truly,
EVELYN R. WRIGHT,
Fredericton, N.B.



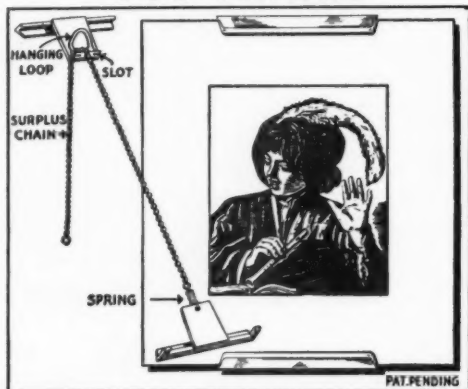
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